Partnership Working

Barriers

Barriers to Effective Partnership Working

- Discuss potential barriers to effective partnership working.
- Be prepared to feedback

Barriers

- Lack of commitment to interagency working
- Role ambiguity and blurring of professional boundaries
- Stereotypical thinking and failure to recognise contribution made by other agencies.
- Lack of communication
- Lack of a shared vision

(Mitchell, 2010)

Barriers

- Political climate.
- Organisational challenges.
- Cultural and professional obstacles.
- Multi-layered integration.
- Competitive relationships.

Barriers

- Bureaucratic need to follow procedures.
- Issues of accountability.
- Professionals or disciplines not relinquishing roles.
- Power struggles.
- Lack of common language/ assessment criteria
- Reliance on key individuals.

Barriers to effective partnership working.

- No clear boundary between partners' responsibilities.
- Reluctance to share information and data with other partners.
- Lack of time available to commit to the partnership, particularly in the early stages.
- Misconceptions or previous negative experiences of partnership working.
- Potential conflicts in philosophies of the partners.
- Lack of training among partners on substantive issues and partnership working.

Class discussion

- How can the barriers to partnership and collaboration be overcome?
- Be prepared to feedback

Enablers to Partnership Working

- Establishing clear role demarcation
- Fostering commitment to inter-agency work at all levels within organisations
- Promoting trust and respect between partners/professionals
- Raising awareness of the context, culture (including belief systems and values) and remit of other agencies

Enablers to Partnership Working

- Addressing issues of power, status and hierarchy
- Effective and clear communication
- Consulting with service users and member agencies on issues, needs and priorities.
- Establishing clear and realistic aims and objectives that are understood and accepted by all agencies.

Enablers to Partnership Working

- Support, supervision and joint training.
- Secondments between services.
- Commitment to evaluation, audit and change.
- Commitment to consulting with, and acting on, service user/carer views.

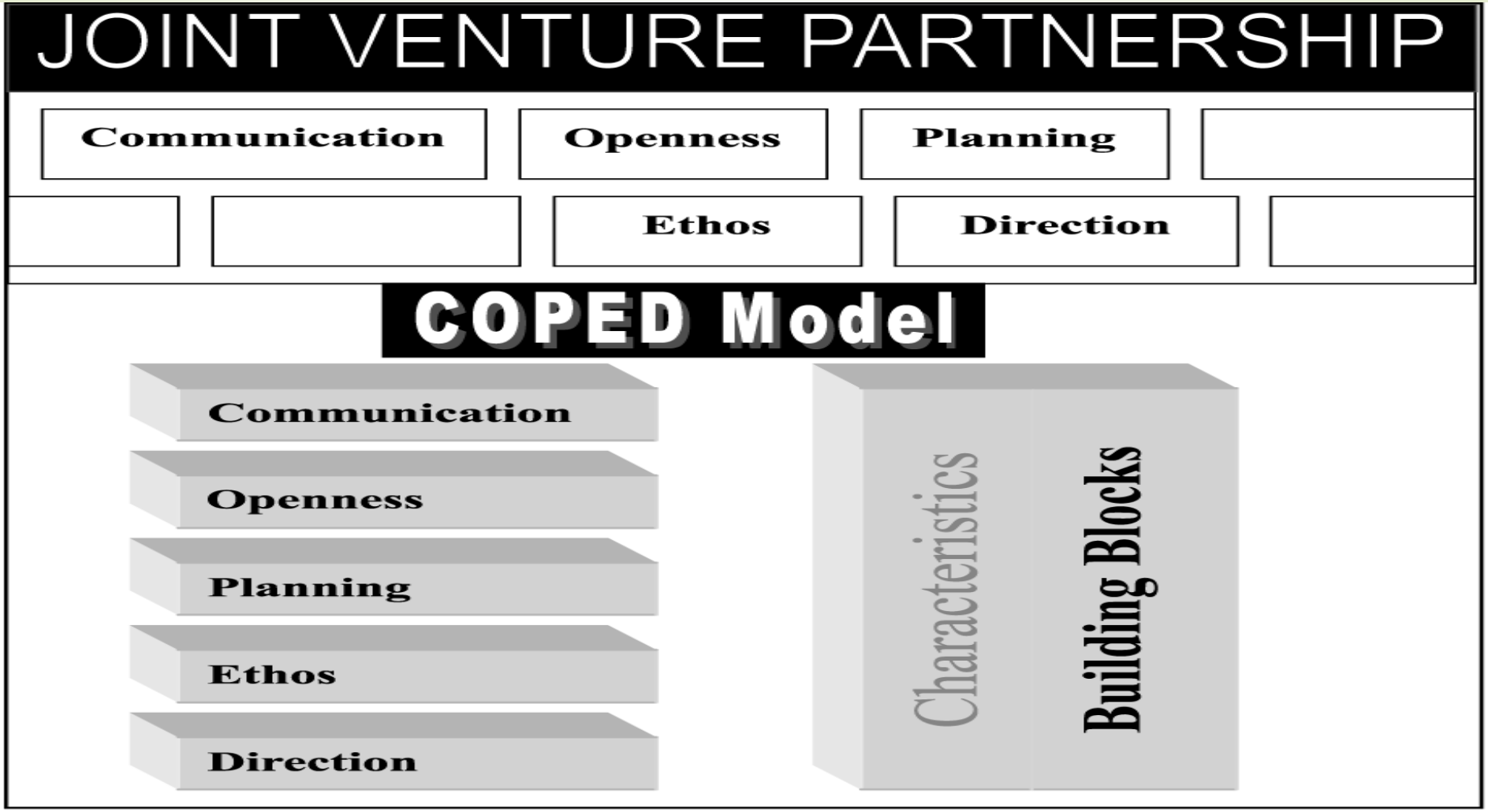
Enablers to Partnership Working

- Commitment to joint working at all levels.
- Strong leadership and emotional intelligence of management.
- Clarity of purpose.
- Clarity of arrangements and responsibilities.
- Practical interventions to promote integrated working

Key principles and ingredients of a successful partnership

- Openness, trust and honesty between partners
- Agreed shared goals and values
- Regular communication between partners

COPED" model (Trafford and Proctor, 2006)



Note: To "Cope" – Manage successfully. This definition is taken from the Oxford Popular Dictionary (1981)

SOLER Model of Communication (OCR 2012)

S	Sit squarely	Sit opposite the other person so that you are either side of and imaginary corner. This allows you to see all aspects of non-verbal communication that you may not see if you were sitting side by side and is less threatening than sitting face on, when working in a challenging environment such as a mental health setting it is important to take personal safety seriously: it is advisable that seating is arranged so that you have easy access to the exit
O	Open position	Sit with uncrossed arms and legs; this conveys to the service user that you are open and not defensive.
L	Lean slightly forward	Leaning slightly towards the service user shows that you are interested and want to understand their problem.
E	Eye contact	It is important to get the balance right. The service users will feel uncomfortable if you stare and will think that you are not interested if you do not look at them at all.
R	Relax	If you are relaxed, you can concentrate on listening rather than worrying about how to respond to the service user.

Key ingredients which - if they are present - will facilitate successful partnership working:

- The aim of the partnership is agreed and understood by all the partners
- The partnership has clear, effective leadership
- The role of each partner is identified and clear to others in the partnership
- There is shared ownership of the partnership and the partners feel there is 'something in it for them'

- There are dedicated time and resources for the administration and operation of the partnership
- There is recognition of different organisational cultures within the partnership
- A supportive atmosphere exists within the partnership where suggestions, ideas and conflicts are addressed

Strategic partnerships should identify:

- The aims and objective of the partnership
- The range of agencies that could be engaged
- The commissioning and management arrangements
- Arrangements for sharing information
- Arrangements for multi-agency training to promote mutual understanding
- Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for both the partnership and the service

Operational partnerships will commonly focus on more practical aspects and should identify:

- The aims and objective of the partnership
- Common procedures
- Protocols and systems for sharing information
- Joint training opportunities
- Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

Partnership Working in Child Protection

What makes a good partnership?

Some characteristics

- **Professionals working together** to achieve the best outcome
- Open sharing of relevant information
- Trust
- Flexibility
- Acknowledging the **skills, knowledge and experience of others**
- Effective communication
- Maintaining a caring and professional approach
- Commitment to a high quality service

What makes a good partnership?

A practitioner needs to be:

- Clear about his/her role.
- Aware of the roles of other professionals.
- Confident about his/her own standards and targets.
- Respectful of the standards and targets that apply to other services
- Respectful of contribution of others working within health and social care.

Effective partnership working (Jelphs & Dickson, 2008)

Effective partnership working

- Shared commitment to goals and objectives
- Interdependence of outcomes
- Role clarity
- Focus on quality and innovation
- Cultural congruity
- True cooperation
- Interprofessional trust and respect

Advantages of multi-disciplinary/ partnership working

- Providing a more effective service.
- Enabling professionals and lay people to achieve their objectives more fully and economically.
- Obtain a full picture of a situation.
- Consider an assessment of service user and meet their needs more effectively, whatever those needs may be.

Further Resources

- SCIE's free e-learning tools on partnership working:

http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/elearning/ipiac/index.asp

- Professionalism, partnership and joined-up thinking: a research review of front line working with children and families (research in practice, 2005) available here: https://lx.iriss.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Professionalism_partnership%20and%20joined%20up%20thinking.pdf

Further Reading

- Bell, A., Corfield, M., Davies, J. and Richardson, N. (2009) 'Collaborative Transdisciplinary Intervention in Early Years – putting theory into practice'. *Child: care, health and development*. 36 (1). p 142–148.

- Jelphs, K. and Dickson, H.,# (2008) *Working in Teams*. PP in association with community care

- Maclean, I., Maclean, S. and Pardy-McLaughlin, L. (2007) *A Handbook of Theory for Social Care Volume Two*. Staffs, Kirwin Maclean Associates

Further Reading

- Maynard, T., Thomas, N. (2004) *An Introduction to Early Childhood Studies,* London: Sage
- OCR (2012) *Developing effective communication in health and social care*. Available at http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/83070-unit-01-developing-effective-communication-in-health-and-social-care-teacher-instructions.pdf (Accessed 26th October 2013)
- Oliver, B Pitt, B. (2011), *Working with Children, Young People and Families,* Exeter: Learning Matters Ltd.
- Stacey, M. (2009) *Teamwork and Collaboration in Early Years Setting*. Exeter: Learning Matters Ltd
- Whittington, C. (2003) Collaboration and Partnership in Context. In: J. Weinstein, C. Whittington & T. Leiba. (Ed.) *Collaboration in Social Work Practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.